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FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

LS 6290

BILL NUMBER: HB 1179

NOTE PREPARED: Dec 21, 2011

BILL AMENDED:

SUBJECT: Wild Animal Permits.

FIRST AUTHOR: Rep. Kersey

FIRST SPONSOR:

BILL STATUS: As Introduced

FUNDS AFFECTED: **GENERAL**
 X DEDICATED
 FEDERAL

IMPACT: State

Summary of Legislation: This bill adds certain persons to and removes certain persons from the application of the wild animal permit laws. The bill makes changes to the definition of "zoological park". It adds a definition of "circus" for purposes of wild animal permits. It also removes the requirement that a permit is necessary if the wild animal is harmful to plants. It further removes the requirement that a separate permit is necessary for each wild animal. It allows an animal to be seized if it poses a risk to public health or safety.

The bill allows the Natural Resources Commission (NRC) to raise the wild animal permit fee.

Effective Date: July 1, 2012.

Explanation of State Expenditures: The bill would result in no significant additional expenses to the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The DNR Director may adopt revised rules to reflect the changes outlined in the bill. The DNR estimates the cost of the permitting program at \$8,800 annually: \$300 for the administrative cost of issuing the permits and \$8,500 for the inspections that are required to be conducted by conservation officers. The bill does not significantly revise the requirements of the existing process.

Background: Current DNR rules regulating the possession of wild animals require a wild animal possession permit for the possession of a state endangered species and the wild animals listed below. The permits must be issued before taking possession of a wild animal and require an application fee of \$10 and an inspection by a conservation officer to ensure that the animal has been obtained legally and that the housing and enclosure requirements are met. Permits must be renewed annually, and inspections are conducted annually, but there is no fee for the renewal of a permit.

Class I	Class II	Class III
Eastern Cottontail Rabbit	Beaver	Wolves (Purebred)
Gray Squirrel	Coyote	Bears (All species)
Fox Squirrel	Gray Fox	Wild Cats (All species excluding feral cats)
Southern Flying Squirrel	Red fox	Venomous Reptiles
	Mink	Crocodilians (At least 5 feet long)
	Muskrat	
	Opossum	
	Raccoon	
	Skunk	
	Weasel	

Currently, one federal inspector is assigned to Indiana and two other states to oversee the inclosure and care of Class III animals, which include large animals such as bears and large cats.

Explanation of State Revenues: DNR has issued 303 wild animal possession permits to 181 individuals in the current year. Permits issued for each animal include: 53 for Class I animals, 187 for Class II animals, and 63 for Class III animals. There are 23 individuals with Class I permits, 129 individuals with Class II permits, and 29 individuals with permits for Class III animals. The bill sets the minimum application fee for the permit at \$10. Currently, renewal permits do not require that a fee be paid. Revenue generated is deposited in the Fish & Wildlife Fund.

The bill allows the Director to set the permit fee above the minimum \$10 amount and removes the requirement that a separate permit be obtained for each animal. However, the amount may not be more than is reasonably necessary to generate revenue sufficient to offset costs incurred by the DNR. The final structure and level of the permit fees would depend on administrative actions taken by the Director.

Explanation of Local Expenditures:

Explanation of Local Revenues:

State Agencies Affected: DNR.

Local Agencies Affected:

Information Sources: DNR.

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